On March 2nd, 2012 at Wright State University, the Public History Graduate Program sponsored its first symposium. Ten WSU Public History graduate students including: Misti Spillman, Robin Heise, Elise Kelly, Maggie Zakri, Nicki Williams, Linda Collins, Noel Rihm, Jeri Kniess, Casey Huegel, and Jeremy Katz presented their research and shared their experiences of their internships, projects, and classes.

The symposium was a great opportunity for WSU’s Public History graduate students to showcase and explain what the field of Public History entails. Audience members learned about the many facets of public history, including: the hands-on experiences and challenges of working in a museum, an archive, or an historical building; the skills needed to perform valuable research and how to utilize that research; and how public history can develop and transform local communities.

The symposium had a wonderful turn out and several Public History alumni were in attendance. Lisa Rickey, fellow alum and a session moderator during the symposium, stated that, “the symposium had the right balance of professionalism and casualness—it was structured enough to be appropriately professional and gave the students a good experience of being presenters, but it was also...well, fun. I never cease to be amazed at all the cool things that public historians can do and are doing.” Symposium presenter, Maggie Zakri said, “it was such a pleasure being part of our very successful first symposium! The diversity of the topics and the obvious enthusiasm of the presenters really displayed a strong picture of what our program is all about. I especially loved talking with all of the alumni and the super-supportive local public history community... and I’m really looking forward to coming back as an alum next year!”

We look forward to next year’s symposium where current students and fellow alums will have the opportunity to present.

On March 1, 2012, 8 Public History students accompanied Dawne Dewey in attending the Annual Statehood Day at the Ohio History Center in Columbus. Statehood day celebrates Ohio’s founding, the state’s history, and its 2011 legislative advocacy achievements for Ohio history.

In 2011, the OHS income tax check-off was approved. The state’s 2011 income tax form will allow taxpayers receiving a refund on their state taxes to contribute a portion of their return to the Society. OHS will, in turn, use these contributions to create a new competitive matching grants program for history-related projects throughout Ohio.

Other legislative success stories were discussed by several Ohio legislators. (Continue Pg 5)
The National Museum of the United States Air Force is the service's national institution for preserving and presenting the Air Force story. Each year more than one million visitors come to the museum to learn about the mission, history and evolving capabilities of America's Air Force. The museum is the world's largest and oldest military aviation museum and features more than 400 aerospace vehicles amid more than 17 acres of indoor exhibit space. The museum’s Collection Division (where I work) is responsible for approximately 80,000 artifacts, 6,000 of which are on exhibit.

I have worked at the museum since 2003 both as a museum specialist and technician/museum curator of aeronautics and have been Museum Registrar since March 2006. As Registrar, I am the primary custodian for all collection documentation including accessioning, incoming loan paperwork, and responsible for maintaining all donor information, accession records, incoming loan records and official correspondence concerning the collection. I maintain the accession register, assign accession numbers, generate accession files for new donations, and insure the donations are fully processed. Additionally, I ensure all required information about a particular donation is collected and maintained in both hard-copy files and electronically where appropriate.

A typical day begins with checking the Museum’s donation mailbox website. Most are offers of the personal memorabilia nature such as; someone’s father’s uniform and medals from the war, souvenir mugs and memorial plaques, or perhaps foot-lockers of clothing representing someone’s career in the Air Force. If the donation offer is archival in nature, such as photographs of scrapbooks, the offer is forwarded to our Research Division which handles all the two-dimensional artifacts. However, all offers are considered and presented to the museum Collections Committee at its weekly meeting. One of the hardest things about this job is telling someone that we do not want or need their material. Most people have a strong emotional attachment to their family’s items and want them preserved for posterity. Like all museums, we don’t have the storage capability or the manpower to accept everything offered, but I have found that a kind, thoughtful, and timely response stating our limitations is the best.

Next I check my own e-mails for interoffice actions and responses. The Museum has nine divisions from Exhibits to Public affairs and usually at some point during the week I am involved with all of them. This is also where I might receive notice of other artifacts available from other Department of Defense (DoD) entities that might be available for exhibit in the Museum. Recently we received three large satellites that had just been declassified from the National Reconnaissance Office. After months of coordination and prep, they are now on exhibit in our Cold War Hangar.

Another project I have been involved in is the storage and rehousing of like items in the Collection. A plan was created to begin segregating like items within the collection into designated storage areas. Special cabinets were ordered that can store rolled items. Multiple drawer cabinets that can house small items contained in special trays were installed in climate controlled areas to better preserve the smaller artifacts. Large industrial racks were purchased to move large crates and unwieldy items off the floor and create more space. A lot of work has gone into this over many years. In the end it should pay off with better accessibility to the collection, along with better intellectual control as we compare and research individual items as they are rehoused.

Occasionally I am required to go over to the main museum to meet a potential donor or pick up a donation. This involves a short drive and at least gets me out of the office for a little while and one of the best parts of the job is meeting people. Most are thrilled to be able to contribute something to the Museum.

Others can’t believe we would want something that they had hidden in the closet for so many years. Some donors are high ranking Air Force officers, while others are retired fighter pilots and some are just the people that worked behind the scenes. Recently, we met a family whose father, a tailor by trade, made the parachute wind tunnel prototypes for almost every parachute ever designed by the Air Force. If he couldn’t get it to work they didn’t produce it. What a great story, and what nice people, and that is what can make this job so rewarding.

Other tasks might not occur daily but are still part of my job. Each week, two of us do a daily walk around of the collection building and its areas to check for leaks, security issues, problems, damage, etc. When my supervisor is on leave, I am often appointed as Acting Division Chief, which requires attending even more meetings! I also coordinate incoming loans from other museums. I provide deaccession paperwork for committee and director signatures. Hey, wait! It’s time to go home. I guess that’s about it for one day.......oh oh the phone’s ringing!
Dave Bragg: (1994) is currently the Staff Curator for Air Combat Command (ACC), U.S. Air Force at Langley AFB, VA. “As Curator I am part of the History Office, and I oversee heritage activities at 19 ACC bases across the USA. This includes one museum, the South Dakota Air and Space Museum at Ellsworth AFB, SD, as well as heritage exhibits, static display aircraft and Air Force Art at all of the bases. I advise historians at the various locations on how to collect, preserve and exhibit a wide variety of Air Force artifacts. All the time people ask how they can swap jobs with me, because this is such an interesting and fun thing to do for a living. I do appreciate Wright State for preparing me for this experience.”

Greg Brown and Kim Richards (2005) were married on November 12, 2011, at the Hendel House, Historical Society of Berks County, Reading, PA.

Mike Arbagi, (2005) recently published an article in the latest issue of Archival Issues, which is the journal of the Midwest Archives Conference (MAC). The article is called “Using Hiram College Archives collections, Ms. Morrow has selected letters, as well as manuscript and diary excerpts to illustrate what life was like at the Western Reserve Eclectic Institute (later Hiram College) for the students and faculty in the years leading to the Civil War. The book also includes a Foreword by noted historian and Hiram College alumnus, Dr. James Kirby Martin. This is the first of three chapbooks that the Archives will be producing over the next four years to commemorate the Eclectic’s involvement in the Civil War both on the battlefield and the home front.”

The book is available for purchase through the Hiram College Bookstore.

http://www.bkstr.com/ProductDisplay/10001-10046-13103-4000000000001711381-1?demoKey=d

Matt Francis (2008) The Archivist at SUNY Potsdam found an early example of a Norman Rockwell illustration. Matt said “it was lucky to find a copy of the magazine that still had the cover, since “most of the covers were lost during the binding process.”

“I do appreciate Wright State for preparing me for this experience.”

- Dave Bragg

Note from the Director: Dawn Dewey

Only one more quarter to go before we move to semesters. Time is flying by. Your adjunct faculty met in March to finalize the 2012-2013 schedule. At the Dialogue with the Director session, current students suggested innovations, like a peer to peer mentoring program, which we will launch this spring. The Public History Program will celebrate its 40th birthday in 2014. We’ll mark the occasion with a grand reunion, so stay tuned for an announcement soon. I’d like to congratulate all of the presenters at our recent symposium. They did a great job. And thanks to the planning committee: Elise Kelly, Linda Collins, Maggie Zakri, Misti Spillman and Adam Greaser.

Finally, a note of sadness on the passing of Pat Nolan. I was lucky enough to be a graduate student when Pat was directing the program. He was my professor, my boss when I worked in the archives, my mentor, my friend, and a great supporter of public history at WSU. He enjoyed what he did and that enthusiasm and fun-loving spirit were contagious. His vote of confidence when I became head of the archives and then director of the program meant the world to me. I was filling some big shoes. He gave me a solid foundation and for that I am very grateful.
Patrick Bates Nolan was born 2/4/1942 to Thomas J. and Cecile H. Nolan in Minneapolis MN, and died peacefully on 1/19/2012 at home in Huntsville, TX following a massive heart attack in November. He graduated from Southwest HS in Minneapolis and attended Carleton College in Northfield MN, where he met Bobbe Ann Shapiro at a square dance. Because Carleton did not then permit students to be married, he transferred to the University of Minnesota, where he completed his BA, MA and Ph.D. in American History. During graduate school summers he proudly served as a Seasonal Park Ranger Historian at Mt. Rushmore, Lincoln's Birthplace National Historic Site, and Glacier National Park.

Patrick taught American History and administered archives and special collections at University of Wisconsin, River Falls and at Wright State University in Dayton OH, where he developed a graduate program in public history. He was a founding member of the Midwest Archives Conference and the Society of Ohio Archivists, and spent a year in Washington, DC with the Council on the Humanities. He organized exhibits and published on the Wright Brothers and the documentation of early flight. After a brief period at The Hagley Museum in Wilmington DE, he came to the Sam Houston Memorial Museum in 1992 as Director. He delighted in costumed reenactment and actually being paid for firing guns and throwing tomahawks. During this time he made 17 trips with the American Orient Express excursion train as a guest lecturer, bragging that this was "the best boondoggle ever." He officially retired from Sam Houston State University at the end of 2011.

Dr. Nolan was active at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Huntsville Rotary, United Way of Walker County, the Texas Prison Museum, the Chamber of Commerce, the Forest Trail, Raven's Rangers and other efforts to promote the University, the Museum, and Huntsville. He was proud to be an honorary member of the Sons of the Republic of Texas and to have served on the board of Humanities Texas. He believed intensely in the value of liberal arts education, railroads and wilderness.

Alumni who Remember Pat:

Pat was the person who talked me into completing my MA in history which I had started years before at a different university. He was a great mentor.—Ann Wikoff

I first met Dr. Pat Nolan in the 1970s at Wright State University. He, Dr. Carl Becker, and Dr. Charles Berry, worked very hard advocating for the budding Public History Program, and delighted in its success. They were quite a trio. While very serious in their academic pursuits, they each possessed a great sense of humor. Carl and Pat, particularly, loved practical jokes, and sometimes amused, and sometimes infuriated their colleagues. Those of us who knew them well still have fun reciting the details of some of their antics.

I last spoke to Pat following the death of his dear friend, Carl Becker in 2008, but we continued to exchange Christmas cards, so I was able to keep up with his life in Texas. I will always remember Pat with affection. He was a mentor, a scholar, a friend, and a great company.—Gillian Hill

Pat came to WSU as the Head of Archives and Special Collections in the late summer or early fall of 1973—about a year after I started my full time job as an archives assistant. Pat had a PhD from the University of Minnesota and he came from an archives position at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls. Pat become my mentor and taught me much about the profession. Pat was one of three people (Charles Berry and Carl Becker) who developed/instituted the Public History Program, then known as the Archival Administration and Museum Management Program. Pat managed this program and the archives at the same time for about ten years. He taught the archives classes also. Pat left WSU about 1987 to take a position at the Hagley Museum in Delaware. Pat had a great sense of humor and was a wonderful person to work for/with.

The Wright Brothers Collection came to WSU early in Pat’s tenure – in 1974 I think. I still remember the day we walked into Harold and Ivonette Miller’s basement and saw the collection for the first time. The collection first came to WSU as a loan and eventually gifted in 1976 and became the centerpiece for all aviation collections collected in the future. Other memorable collections acquired in those years: Katherine Kennedy Brown, O.S Kelly Company, Conservancy District, Jane Reece, Oscar Ladley Papers, etc.

Pat was a person who saw the big picture and thought on a grand scheme. He let me and other staff carry on the normal day to day duties while he was developing/administering the history program and working with the SAA Education Committee. He most definitely was the one person who had the biggest impact on my career as an archivist.—Robert Smith
The keynote speaker was U.S. Senator John Glenn. Senator Glenn engaged the audience by discussing his childhood memories growing up in New Concord, OH and reminisced about his experiences as an astronaut and U.S. Senator.

During lunch a couple of students had the opportunity to meet Senator Glenn.

After lunch, Dawne and the students viewed Ohio’s original 1802 constitution, visited the Controversy 2 exhibit, met others in the field, created networks, met legislators, and learned about how to promote Ohio’s history. It was a great experience for our future public historians!
The mission of the Public History program at Wright State University is to prepare professionals who are well-grounded in knowledge of historical content, professional training, and hands-on experience.

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ARMA Scholarship awarded to WSU Public History Student

WSU Public History student Tricia McEldowney was recently awarded the Waymon Underwood Scholarship from the Greater Dayton Chapter of ARMA International. Congratulations Tricia!

Doing Public History the “Wright” Way since 1974.